

Message Text

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ORIGIN PM-05

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 EA-10 NEA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 ACDA-12
SAS-02 CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 NSC-05
SP-02 SS-15 L-03 OES-09 PA-01 DOEE-00 /110 R

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P R 211812Z AUG 78
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY CANBERRA PRIORITY
INFO USMISSION GENEVA
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI
AMEMBASSY LONDON

S E C R E T STATE 211696

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PARM, AU

SUBJECT:AUSTRALIAN COMMENTS ON CTB NEGOTIATIONS

1. AUSTRALIAN EMBASSY COUNSELOR COTTRILL CALLED ON DEPARTMENT POLMIL OFF AUGUST 18 TO DISCUSS STATUS OF CTB NEGOTIATIONS.

2. SPEAKING UNDER INSTRUCTIONS, HE EXPRESSED GOA CONCERN OVER RECENT NEWS REPORTS (PINCUS ARTICLE) THAT US WAS CONSIDERING FAVORING A CTB THAT WOULD PERMIT TESTING AT THE LEVEL OF ONE-KILOTON OR HIGHER. IN THE VIEW OF THE GOA, THIS WOULD HAVE VERY SERIOUS NEGATIVE EFFECTS ON THE NON-PROLIFERATION BENEFITS OF A CTB. BASED ON PREVIOUS AUSTRALIAN CONVERSATIONS WITH INDIAN OFFICIALS, THE GOA

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FEARS THAT INDIA AND OTHER KEY STATES HAVING THE POTENTIAL TO DEVELOP NUCLEAR WEAPONS WOULD NOT RPT NOT SIGN A CTB THAT PERMITTED TESTING AT THE KILOTON LEVEL. COTTRILL REFERRED TO REPORTS THAT SOME USG EXPERTS THOUGHT THAT SOME LIMITED LEVEL OF EXPERIMENTAL TESTING IS NECESSARY TO HELP RETAIN EXPERT PERSONNEL AT WEAPONS LABORATORIES. THE GOA BELIEVES THAT, IF SUCH LOW LEVEL TESTING IS PERMITTED UNDER

A CTB, THERE MUST BE A CLEAR "WINDOW" BETWEEN THIS PERMITTED LEVEL OF EXPERIMENTS AND THE PROHIBITED LEVEL WHICH RELATES TO WEAPONS PROGRAMS.

3. POLMIL OFFICER COMMENTED THAT THE US IS SEEKING A COMPREHENSIVE TEST BAN, BUT THAT THE QUESTION OF WHAT LEVEL OF LABORATORY EXPERIMENTS MIGHT BE ALLOWED IS STILL UNDER REVIEW. HE ASSURED COTTRILL THAT DEPARTMENT IS FULLY AWARE OF POTENTIAL DAMAGE TO NON-PROLIFERATION BENEFITS OF A CTB IF KILOTON-LEVEL TESTING IS PERMITTED. CHRISTOPHER

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